

## CLAIMS

1. A press belt (11; 21; 31; 41; 51; 61; 71; 81) employed for pressurizing a  
zonal material, endlessly formed by an elastic material with the thickness progressively  
5 reduced from a central pressurizing portion (C<sub>1</sub>; C<sub>2</sub>; C<sub>3</sub>; C<sub>4</sub>; C<sub>5</sub>; C<sub>6</sub>; C<sub>7</sub>) toward end  
pressurizing portions (A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>'; A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>'; A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>'; A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>4</sub>'; A<sub>5</sub>, A<sub>5</sub>'; A<sub>6</sub>, A<sub>6</sub>'; A<sub>7</sub>, A<sub>7</sub>').
2. The press belt according to claim 1, wherein the thickness is progressively  
reduced from said central pressurizing portion (C<sub>1</sub>; C<sub>2</sub>; C<sub>3</sub>; C<sub>4</sub>; C<sub>5</sub>; C<sub>6</sub>; C<sub>7</sub>) toward said  
10 end pressurizing portions (A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>'; A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>'; A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>'; A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>4</sub>'; A<sub>5</sub>, A<sub>5</sub>'; A<sub>6</sub>, A<sub>6</sub>'; A<sub>7</sub>, A<sub>7</sub>') by  
at least one type of technique selected from a group of a crown curve technique, a linear  
technique, a stepped technique and a trapezoidal technique.
3. The press belt according to claim 1, including a cylindrical endless  
reinforcing base (12; 22; 32; 42; 52; 62; 72), a first elastic layer (13; 23; 33; 43; 53; 63;  
15 73) located on the outer peripheral surface of said reinforcing base and a second elastic  
layer (14; 24; 34; 44; 54; 64; 74) located on the inner peripheral surface of said  
reinforcing base, wherein the thickness of said first elastic layer is progressively reduced  
from said central pressurizing portion (C<sub>1</sub>; C<sub>2</sub>; C<sub>3</sub>; C<sub>4</sub>; C<sub>5</sub>; C<sub>6</sub>; C<sub>7</sub>) toward said end  
pressurizing portions (A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>'; A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>'; A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>'; A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>4</sub>'; A<sub>5</sub>, A<sub>5</sub>'; A<sub>6</sub>, A<sub>6</sub>'; A<sub>7</sub>, A<sub>7</sub>').  
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4. The press belt according to claim 1, including a cylindrical endless  
reinforcing base (12; 22; 32; 42; 52; 62; 72), a first elastic layer (13; 23; 33; 43; 53; 63;  
73) located on the outer peripheral surface of said reinforcing base and a second elastic  
25 layer (14; 24; 34; 44; 54; 64; 74) located on the inner peripheral surface of said  
reinforcing base, wherein the thickness of said second elastic layer is progressively  
reduced from said central pressurizing portion (C<sub>1</sub>; C<sub>2</sub>; C<sub>3</sub>; C<sub>4</sub>; C<sub>5</sub>; C<sub>6</sub>; C<sub>7</sub>) toward said  
end pressurizing portions (A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>'; A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>'; A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>'; A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>4</sub>'; A<sub>5</sub>, A<sub>5</sub>'; A<sub>6</sub>, A<sub>6</sub>'; A<sub>7</sub>, A<sub>7</sub>').

5. The press belt according to claim 1, wherein the difference between the thickness ( $C_1C_1'$ ;  $C_2C_2'$ ;  $C_3C_3'$ ;  $C_4C_4'$ ;  $C_5C_5'$ ;  $C_6C_6'$ ;  $C_7C_7'$ ) of said central pressurizing portion and the thickness ( $A_1B_1$ ,  $A_1'B_1'$ ;  $A_2B_2$ ,  $A_2'B_2'$ ;  $A_3B_3$ ,  $A_3'B_3'$ ;  $A_4B_4$ ,  $A_4'B_4'$ ;  $A_5B_5$ ,  
5  $A_5'B_5'$ ;  $A_6B_6$ ,  $A_6'B_6'$ ;  $A_7B_7$ ,  $A_7'B_7'$ ) of said end pressurizing portions is 2 to 30 % of the thickness of said central pressurizing portion.

6. The press belt according to claim 1, wherein said press belt (11; 21; 31; 41; 51; 61; 71; 81) is a papermaking press belt.

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7. The press belt according to claim 1, wherein said press belt (11; 21; 31; 41; 51; 61; 71; 81) is a shoe press belt.

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8. A shoe press comprising at least the press belt (11; 21; 31; 41; 51; 61; 71; 81) according to claim 1, a pressure shoe (82) applying pressure to said press belt and pressure regulation means (83) regulating the pressure of said pressure shoe.